DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 153 576 HE 009 899

AUTHOR Bruening, William H.
TITLE A Philosophy of Administration.
PUB DATE 78
NOTE 8p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Administrator Characteristics; *Chief Administrators; *College Administration; Higher Education; Leadership Qualities; Management; *Models; Power Structure; *Presidents; *Salaries
IDENTIFIERS McGregors Theory X and Theory Y

ABSTRACT

Justification is given for paying relatively large salaries to college administrators, specifically the president or chancellor and the chief academic officer. Three administrative task areas are discussed as criteria: management, administration per se, and leadership. It is contended that only leadership can be used as a criterion for administrative performance. Using models like McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y, the paper claims that authority ultimately rests with the academic community, if not by state statute then by the very nature of an academic community. (Author/SPG)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
William H. Breuning
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

ED153576

A PHILOSOPHY OF ADMINISTRATION

William H. Breuning

For many of us in academia, The Chronicle of Higher Education is a source for information about our academic community. The issue of September 6, 1977 (Vol. XV, No. 1) has a table of salaries for administrators in its fact-file section. The table lists a variety of college/university officers and gives average salaries for each. We will concentrate on two officers: the president or chancellor and the chief academic officer. For public universities the combined salary for these two officers is $91,097; for public four-year colleges $74,906; for private universities $102,063; and for private four-year colleges $57,189. It is safe to assume that many colleges and all universities also have other line academic administrators like deans. The Chronicle gives no data for such other academic administrators. It is also safe to assume that the two chief administrators referred to above have sizeable staff with significant salaries.

Education costs a lot of money. The October 25, 1977 number of the Chronicle (Volume XV, No. 8) contains a listing of expenditures for higher education state by state. California had the highest gross appropriation at $1,961,525,000 and New Hampshire has the lowest gross at $22,859,000. Per capita expenditures range from a high of $165.75 for Alaska to a low of $27,81 for New Hampshire. Appropriations per $1,000 of personal income range from a high $17.83 for Utah to a low of $4.63 for New Hampshire. One conclusion that can be drawn from these data is that New Hampshire ranks last in all categories reported. One might be leery of seeking employment in New Hampshire also.

HE 009 899

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

Given that we as a country spend billions of dollars per annum for higher education and given that salaries for high level administrators are quite substantial, this paper addresses itself to the question of accountability of administrators. But we raise the question of accountability in a somewhat different way than usual. We are not addressing ourselves to questions about the products of higher education directly. We address ourselves to a more general question of the philosophy of administration that is exhibited on so many campuses in our country. The Chronicle weekly reports crises on campuses involving administrative decisions that have been challenged by faculty and/or students. Why are administrators paid substantial salaries when so much intramural conflict exists?

We propose one possible answer to this question. And our answer suggests that one of the main causes for such conflict is a misconception of and/or confusion about a variety of functions all of which are labelled administrative tasks. We propose at least three different administrative tasks: management, administration per se, and leadership. We argue that much of the conflict on our campuses occurs because many administrators and faculty and students focus their attention on the first two tasks and seldom focus on the last task.

The management task as defined herewith concerns itself primarily with the economic affairs of a campus. The management task concerns accounting for the use of funds in a business sense. Most campuses have a business officer of some sort, but the chief academic officer as well as the chief administrator often have significant input into business affairs and usually have some approval power for the budget.

It is often the case that academic administrators have little or no formal training in accounting, economics, or business. We can only speculate

on the problems caused by this lack of knowledge. Lest there be some mistake we are not arguing that academic administrators should not have decision making authority for financial affairs of the campus. We are arguing that academic officers do not have expertise ex officio for the detailed issues involved in financial matters. Our experience has been that many academic administrators delight in manipulating budgets and checking forms that have little or no relation to their capabilities or experience. The chancellor at our campus is reputed to check the addition for all travel requests. Such travel requests require six (6) different signatures. This concentration on management/accountability too often seems to be the focus of academic administrators.

The second task mentioned is administration per se. This task is primarily executive-execution of already existing policies and procedures. A legal/legislative analogy may be helpful in explaining the administrative task. It is not uncommon for the Congress to pass legislation creating an administrative agency which agency then develops specific rules and regulations concern the area of jurisdiction assigned by legislation. As we use the term administration per se we are claiming that this administration task has no authority to create new policies or procedures and could easily be filled by an executive director or executive secretary type of position. This executive director would handle the routine and mundane affairs of the campus and would have to defer to either a board of trustees or the faculty for policy or personnel decisions of any import. This executive director would be more of a staff position than a line position. Such an executive director would manage the non-financial aspects of the college or university. In reality many campuses already have individuals who do tasks similar to

what we have called administration per se. The individuals have titles like "assistant to the president" or "administrative assistant to the vice-chancellor for academic affairs." These individuals need not be faculty members and are often sought from either the legal profession or the business community.

The third task of administration we have called leadership. Leadership is not an easy concept to define and various theories of leadership have been proposed. At least three theories of leadership bear mentioning: the traits theory, the situation theory, and the group theory. The first theory claims that certain characteristics or traits can be identified which are essential to leadership, e.g., empathy, intelligence, etc. The second theory claims that conditions in a particular situation determine what constitutes leadership. The third theory claims that leadership is ultimately determined by the constituency which is led such that which individual actually leads is of little importance.

A variety of research has been done on the notion of leadership and some is worth mentioning. Hemphill, Coons, and Halpin have worked out a Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ) and have found that leader behavior fall into two categories: 1) Initiating Structure in Interaction, and 2) Consideration.

> Initiating Structure refers to the leader's behavior in delineating the relationship between himself and the members of the work-group, and in endeavoring to establish well-defined patterns of organization, channels of communication, and methods of procedure. Consideration refers to behavior indicative of friendship, mutual trust, respect, and warmth in the relationship between the leader and the members of his staff.[1]

Getzels and Guba have produced the well-known models of leader behavior: 1) the nomothetic model; 2) the ideographic model; and 3) the transactional behavior model. Research in higher education/administration has

been done by Hodgkinson and Mieth, Richman and Farmer, and Kauffman.

The research into leadership, is fairly extensive. We mention it but will not discuss it. We focus on the broader issue of leadership as exemplified by models such as McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y. We take it as obvious that Y type administration is more desirable than X type administration. At the risk of oversimplification, a Theory Y leader assumes, takes it for granted, believes that people are capable of autonomous activity and that autonomy entails responsibility. As Carl Rogers says:

> The task of the administrator is to so arrange the organizational conditions and methods of operation that people can best achieve their own goals by also furthering the jointly defined goals of the institution. [Getzels and Guba's transactional behavior.] The administration finds that his [her] work consists primarily of removing obstacles such as "red tape," of creating opportunities where teachers, and students and administrators (including himself) [herself] can freely use their potential, of encouraging growth and change, and of creating a climate in which each person can believe that his [her] potential is valued, his [her] capacity for responsibility is trusted, his [her] creative abilities prized.[2]

Simone de Beauvoir defines ethics as the "triumph of freedom over facticity." An administrator in the leadership task is concerned with the situation of the academic community not its freedom--in the sense that the community's freedom cannot and ought not to be controlled.

Implied in the notion of freedom is the notion that persons are responsible agents, can and must make decisions not only concerning their academic situation but also their non-academic setting. Thus, it is inconsistent for an administrator to have authority for making decisions concerning the academic community without that community being able to determine its own future. Also it is inconsistent for the authority for making decisions to be far removed from the community. Recall that we earlier mentioned a travel form that required six signatures before the travel was authorized.

What we are arguing for is an organizational chart that is horizontal in nature as opposed to vertical. And we are also arguing for as much decentralization as possible. An academic community must have at least the authority to remove an administrator who does not encourage and facilitate freedom.

Ideally, administrators as leaders would not have authority granted to them by a Board or by the office held but by the community because of leadership behavior. There is a great amount of risk involved in such an administrative model both for the community and for the administrator. However, the alternative of paternalistic or materialistic decision making is unacceptable for a community of human beings. Our model of administration suggests that leadership is the only ultimately important task of administration and that each of us is compelled to exhibit leadership behavior and finally that administration as leadership cannot and should rest with one individual or a group of individuals but with the community as a whole.

An analysis of why colleges and/or universities pay relatively high salaries for administrators is another question. We have sketched a model for administration. The dysfunction of that model leads us to a paper on academic pathology--a paper worth writing but a paper not covered by the purposes of the present paper.

NOTES

[1]Ronald C. Doll, Leadership to Improve Schools (Worthington, Ohio: Charles A. Jones Publishing Company, 1972), p. 18.

[2]Carl Rogers, Freedom to Learn (Columbus, Ohio: Charles Merrill, 1969), p. 208.